

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON FAIRFAX CONNECTOR ROUTE 989 ROUTING AND SCHEDULE CHANGES

This document summarizes comments received by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation regarding FAIRFAX CONNECTOR Route 989 routing and schedule changes that were to have been implemented on March 6, 2006. The planned changes were postponed in order to consider comments and a petition from Route 989 customers received before the implementation date and to provide a period for receiving additional input from customers and the public which included the holding of a public meeting on March 1st and the distributing of notices to customers informing them that comments would be received until March 10th. Staff will defer responding to the comments until it puts out draft recommendations on routing and schedule, however follow-up to questions regarding ridership and use of Route 380 buses raised at the public meeting are provided after the summary of comments.

Comments were received from 236 individuals of whom 194 were signers of the petition. Fifty-two members of the public attended the public meeting of whom 19 provided verbal comments. In addition, 40 written comments and 26 E-mails concerning the 989 were received. Almost all of the written comments and the E-mails were submitted from either the petitioners and/or the meeting attendees.

Comments received before March 6th through the close of the comment period on March 10th are summarized below.

Comments On the Planned March 6th Changes

Comment	Number Commenting
Planned PM schedule will increase trip times for Pentagon customers. (Interpreted to mean that the Pentagon should be the last, instead of first, stop in the PM.)	194 from the petition
Change the time of the planned 6:05PM trip so that buses will not be entering I-66 at approximately the same time that the HOV restriction is lifted.	194 from the petition
The planned changes do nothing to alleviate the issues of schedule performance and overcrowding that have plagued Route 989. (Interpreted to mean that buses should run to schedule and that additional buses should be added to eliminate standing.)	205 (194 from the petition) on schedule performance. 207 (194 from the petition) on overcrowding.
Retain current routing and schedule.	20
Favor the planned March 6 th changes.	14
Variations on splitting Route 989 into Pentagon only and Crystal City only express routes and/or alternating trips between the Pentagon and Crystal City.	8
Treat Crystal City customers fairly.	7
Make fewer stops in Crystal City. (Includes eliminating Army-Navy Drive and Pentagon City from the route.)	6

Comment	Number Commenting
Use under-utilized resources (buses) on 989. (Includes use of Route 380 buses.)	6
Don't eliminate Route 989 (Includes before and after rail extension to Reston.)	4

General Suggestions on Routing

- Avoid driving into Pentagon traffic twice.
- Last stop should be 27th Street in Crystal City.
- Don't use Eads leaving the Pentagon.
- Take the flyover to Crystal City.
- After Crystal City Metro stop, go straight down Clark Place, make a right on 20th Street, then left on Clark Street.
- Provide access to the middle of Crystal City.
- Keep a link between the Pentagon and Crystal City.

Other Comments/Suggestions

- Maintain buses better.
- Operators need to be better trained.
- Keep service on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Columbus Day and Veteran's Day. (Comment responds to staff's proposal that service on these holidays and on the day after Thanksgiving, and weekdays between Christmas and New Year's be eliminated because of low ridership.)
- Allow passengers to sit on bus while laying over to avoid cold, bad weather etc.
- Let Metro operate the 989 if it has the resources.
- Equalize ride times for Crystal City and Pentagon customers.
- Need a better method for utilizing Metro checks to pay the \$3.00 fare.
- Need SmarTrip technology as soon as possible.
- Better enforcement of HOV restrictions is needed.
- Need earlier AM and PM trips.
- Need a later PM "mop-up" trip.

Continues on next page with follow-ups to public meeting questions.

Follow-up to Public Meeting Questions/Comments on Ridership

Following is additional information on daily ridership relative to questions raised at the public meeting. Average Daily Passengers per Revenue Trip is a primary measure of the effectiveness of a bus route. The average for all Fairfax Connector routes for the first 8 months of this fiscal year was 17.6. Of the 58 Fairfax Connector routes, the average for 19 routes was greater than the system average. Average Daily Ridership per Revenue Trip and other data for the top 10 of these 19 routes is shown in the following table.

Route	Daily Revenue Trips	Average Daily Passengers Per Revenue Trip	Average Daily Passenger Trips	Deadhead Trips Between Revenue Trips	Ridership Trend Year-to-Date
401	61	47.3	2,887	No	Up
171	71	39.1	2,776	No	Up
950	80	38.8	3,106	No	Up
989	14	35.9	503*	Yes	Up
554	14	34.4	481	Yes	Level
152	36	34.2	1,230	No	Up
980	73	34.1	2,487	No	Level
151	38	31.9	1,212	No	Up
322	28	29.5	827	No	Up
551	30	26.3	788	No	Up

*Corrects the passengers per trip figure given at the public meeting.

The table shows that ridership per revenue trip on Route 989 is comparatively high, but ridership per day is comparatively low but growing. However, if deadhead trips between revenue trips were considered, the number of 989 daily riders per trip on average would be 25.2 which is low comparatively.

The table also indicates that there are at least 3 routes (171, 401 and 950) that should receive additional resources before 989 does when daily revenue trips, daily ridership per trip, daily ridership, deadheading, ridership trend, and standing loads in some route segments are taken into consideration. As 2 of these 3 routes are operated out of the same garage as Route 380, they would most likely receive any buses reallocated from 380 first. From the perspective of standing loads, routes 551 and 980 are also competing with 989 for additional resources. As example, about 10 of the 14 trips operated by 980 between 4:30PM and 6:00PM are carrying standing loads compared to 2-3 operated by the 989. As information, the cost of adding trips to the 989 would be \$28,878 annually per trip (1.5 hours/trip x \$70.27/hour x 255 days) unless offset by some savings

Follow-up to Public Meeting Questions/Comments on Cost of Operating Route 989 Out of Newington Garage

Staff estimates that it would cost an additional \$36,000 annually to operate Route 989 out of the Newington garage. This follows up on staff's statement that it would be too costly to operate the 989 out of the Newington garage because of the additional deadheading involved in response to a question from an attendee at the public meeting.

Next Steps

- May 19th: Put out draft proposal on the 989 routing and schedule for comment.
- May 19th - June 2nd: Receive comments on draft proposal.
- July 14th: Final routing and schedule issued with implementation date to be determined.

The targeted dates may be extended if it is decided to resurvey customers or collect additional data.



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